

CHARLIE'S

LETTERS

By Charlie Williams

CHARLIE'S LETTERS



The letters in this book were written by Charlie Williams, *Ministry to Men* Director. After many requests for him to write a book about *Ministry to Men*, and after several attempts to do just that, someone suggested he simply write letters sharing some of the truths God has been teaching him during the years. That was easy and the letters began to flow. In July 2010 we began posting his letters on the *Ministry to Men* Web site www.ministrytomen.net.

Here are those letters...

Contents

Introduction

Acknowledgements

Letter 1 - Sharing What I'm Learning

Letter 2 - More on Learning (Philemon vs 6)

Letter 3 - More on Learning (I Corinthians 10:13)

Letter 4 - Left Turn/Right Turn

Letter 5 – Watered Down Testimony

Letter 6 – Differences Complement

Letter 7 – Give God Your Bouquet

Letter 8 – Footprints in the Sand

Letter 9 – Mind Can Conceive-Believe

Letter 10 – One Liners

Letter 11 – To the Men God Has Put Into My Life

Letter 12 – God Isn't Going to Help Me...

Letter 13 - God Has Done It for Me

Letter 14 – Four Stages of Love

Letter 15 – Shadow

Letter 16 – Ideas Bigger Than Your Life

Letter 17 – Barnabas

Letter 18 – The Great Commission

Letter 19 – More One Liners

Letter 20 – We Are Not Called to Success but to Faithfulness

Letter 21 – Pure Faith Sees God Alone

Letter 22 – Be Still and Know That I AM God!

Letter 23 - Live for the Moment

Letter 24 – Trusting God

Letter 25 – Some Thoughts on Marriage

Letter 26 – Get Your But Out of the Way

Letter 27 – God's Place in My Life

Letter 28 – For Every Beast of the Forest is Mine,

Letter 29 – Would You Lend Me Your Faith?

Letter 30 – One of My Favorite Verses

Letter 31 – What Are Some Ways to 'Minister to Men?'

Letter 32 – We Plant and Water, But It's God Who Gives the Increase

Letter 33 – II Timothy 2:2

Letter 34 – Stories That Impacted My Life

Letter 35 – Romans 5:8
Letter 36 – Your ‘Stuff’ Isn’t Going With You
Letter 37 – Five Stages of Love
Letter 38 – More One Liners
Letter 39 – I Thessalonians 5:2
Letter 40 – When Is the Best Time to Plant a Tree?
Letter 41 – Are You Exulting?
Letter 42 – Two Very Difficult Times in Jesus’ Life
Letter 43 - Joshua 1:8
Letter 44 – Numbers 8:23-26
Letter 45 – Facts versus Feelings
Letter 46 – One on One Discipleship
Letter 47 – II Corinthians 5:7
Letter 48 – Romans 5:1-5
Letter 49 – Hinds’ Feet
Letter 50 – Speaking the Truth in Love
Letter 51 – II Corinthians 5:7
Letter 52 – What Do You Really Want?
Letter 53 – I Corinthians 13: 11-13
Letter 54 – Matthew 28: 19, 20
Letter 55 – Ephesians 5:33
Letter 56 – Excerpts from Major Ian Thomas’ *The Saving Life of Christ*
Letter 57 – What Are My Idols?
Letter 58 – Conformed to the Image of Christ
Letter 59 – Who Is Your Man?
Letter 60 – Notes for Men
Letter 61 – Restoring Fellowship
Letter 62 – Reading the Bible As If It Were a Letter from God to Me
Letter 63 – Yes, Lord, I Believe. Help My Unbelief
Easter Booklet

Introduction

I am honored to be asked to write the introduction for this book. I have a vested interest in the book, the author is my husband. Now before you stop reading this, I must admit I'm biased, but I also know a good thing when I see it and this book is one of them.

Many reading this book have known Charlie for a long time, and many of the letters will be familiar to you because he has shared the truths from them many times; for those who don't know him you will find great depth and a firm walk with our Lord. Someone once described Charlie as a plumb line, and I agree he has been that in my life and in so many others.

I started to say Charlie began his walk with God in 1961 but that's just when he realized it; God had been active in Charlie's life before the foundation of the world. (Ps. 139: 16) But in October 1960 I became a Christian and that turned Charlie's life upside down; that's a story in itself. In May 1961, Charlie gave his life to Christ, and our lives have been wonderful ever since. NOT! But God continues to draw us closer to Himself, and to each other.

God gave Charlie a heart for men right from the beginning. In the early '60's we attended Riverview Garden Baptist Church, in St. Louis County, MO, where the men took Charlie in, loved him, befriended him and in the process, disciplined him. Pastor Ron Fisher was very instrumental in Charlie's early discipleship; although I don't think either of them realized it, but through their friendship God worked many truths into Charlie. Around that time he got involved with a group of men from CBMC and Grandpa Finke, in particular, who also mentored him. He attended the Jewish Messianic Forum in St. Louis for years

getting a great education of Christ in the Old Testament. Again, for those who know him, you know he loves the Old Testament. During this time he was asked to serve on a committee to put on the 1970 CBMC National Convention. He was a co-vice chairman, with Charles Todd being the chairman. After the convention Charles asked Charlie to come to work for him. He did and through his 15 years with Todd, Inc. again Charlie learned much from another man, Charles Todd. There is story here too...

In 1983 CBMC asked Charlie to come on staff with them as a Metro Director for St. Louis. Another story... But for this space I'll just say he accepted and served in various positions until 1999. At that time he left CBMC thinking he would go back into the business arena, but men from St. Charles County where he had been serving with CBMC for the past several years, encouraged him to start a ministry in St. Charles, MO. God gave them the name 'Ministry to Men' because that is what they are all about, 'ministering to men'. That is another interesting story for another time. It looks like I could write a book myself, maybe someday I will.

Welcome to 'Charlie's Letters'. We pray you are blessed by reading them as Charlie has been in sharing them.

Tammy Williams

New Introduction for Charlie's Letters

March 2017

In the original introduction to 'Charlie's Letters' I mentioned several areas of Charlie's life and made the comment 'there's another story that could be told.' Today I'd like to share the story we are living right now. I've heard it said there are many chapters in each life, and Charlie and I would like to share our current chapter with you.

Charlie was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in June 2011 and reevaluated again in 2013 with the same diagnosis. He is in the middle stage and doing pretty well. That is a relative statement, Alzheimer's is an ugly disease. There are many things he can't do anymore, but his walk with the Lord is deeper than ever. He is in his element when talking about God. If you get a chance to visit with him, don't miss the opportunity. He will tell you life is all about Christ in you. Yes, we are in Christ, that's salvation, but he will tell you that Christ in you is where the secret key is. Throughout 'Charlie's Letters' you will read these truths and see what he's talking about. As you read the letters take note of these truths throughout the book.

Charlie will readily share that he can't read very well now, that although he used to be really good with numbers, not so anymore, he can't remember people's names, has trouble understanding me when I use too many words or talk too fast and it is an understatement to say that has been very frustrating for him.

I have watched him on many occasions when he was frustrated, and given a little time I've watched him put his focus on God instead of himself. As I've watched him during the process, I've been blessed. He shared last night with a group that what has happened has been difficult and frustrating but, he has come to

realize God isn't making a mistake, Christ is still walking through him and he's good with that.

Charlie and I began learning years ago that we are on the same team, and we make a good team, we still do. We have fun together, although he wins most of the games we play and he likes that. We continue to learn how to work thru times when we don't communicate very well, and with Alzheimer's that happens. But talking to each other and being honest has weathered the storms so far. God has showered us with much grace.

I've known for years that we should be thankful in all things, but I have to be honest, I've had very few times when I've actually thanked God for this chapter of our lives. I've thanked Him for His ever presence, His wisdom for meeting our need, but today, reflecting on what Charlie shared last night I am able to thank Him for this disease. God continues to use Charlie as a plumb line in my life. As I watch him, I'm learning in new ways God is sufficient in all things, even this.

I see Christ in Charlie. And you know what? That can be said of you and me too, when we really grasp the truth that we died in Christ and now He lives in us. Check out the letter that talks about getting your 'but' out of the way.

As you read 'Charlie's Letters' our prayer is God opens your eyes to the truth Charlie is living, that he is dead and Christ is living His life through Charlie.

Galatians 2:20 sums it up.

Tammy Williams

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Tammy, for the countless hours she has worked putting these letters into a way they make sense.

Years ago, I told her, that all the many books written by Oswald Chambers were actually written by his wife. She went to his meetings and wrote every word he spoke, he never wrote a word. I asked her why she hadn't been taking notes when I spoke.

As you read this book, you will see what a great job she did of taking the letters I scribbled and making sense out of them.

I also want to thank Ben Blanton and Brian Bredensteiner for hours of proofreading.

Photographs by
Steve Williams & Tammy Williams

Other graphics from
Windows Clipart & unknown sources

Note: I've given credit where I knew it belonged. So many of the things I share have been a part of my life for so long, I don't remember where I heard or read them.

Over 3,000 printed and given away since 2011

Letter 1

Sharing What I'm Learning (Romans 12: 1, 2)

'Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.'

This letter has to go back probably 30 years to when I met Charlie (Tremendous) Jones and had offered to get him four or five speaking engagements in the St. Louis area and be his chauffeur. He exposed me to Oswald Chambers during that time, but he also made a comment to me that took many years to begin to make sense to me. He said he wasn't Charlie (Tremendous) Jones, he was Charlie (learning) Jones and that he had never learned anything. I didn't understand what he meant that he had never learned anything. But as the years have gone by I've discovered that to say that I've learned something means that I know all about it and which, in essence, means to me that now I no longer need God in that area. So, I am thankfully in the process of learning every day; from the scriptures, from the people I associate with, from society, from everything going on around us.

God speaks about this in Romans 12:1& 2 where basically He tells us that we no longer need to be conformed to the world that we were born into, but we are to be transformed by the renewing of our mind, and this comes by learning.

Have a great day.

God bless,

Letter 2

More on Learning (Philemon vs 6) NIV

*'I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith,
so that you will have a full understanding of every
good thing we have in Christ.'*

God gives us a wonderful method of learning and He shares that with us as Paul shares with Philemon in that small letter he sent him. He said, "I pray that you would be active in sharing your faith so that you might have a better understanding of all you have in Christ." So, if I am learning to walk with Christ, I need to be sharing what I'm learning and as I share, God continues to teach me. That's a wonderful process. But I must be careful that my faith is not what I'm learning or what I trust in, but it is faith in God and the faith of God.

*'God gave man gifts and abilities,
and the ability to teach others also.'*

Exodus 35: 30-35

Letter 3

More on Learning (I Corinthians 10:12)

‘Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.’

God gives me a very strong warning in this verse as far as learning is concerned. The verse says, ‘Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall’. Gentlemen, when I come to the point where I’ve totally learned something and believe I know it as well as I’m ever going to know it, I’m pretty much ruling God out of that aspect of my life and I figure I can handle it because I know it. What God is telling me in this verse is that I will never learn the totality of what He is teaching me until I get to heaven, and I should never make the assumption that I have.

*When the Bible says ‘therefore’ look back
and see what it’s there for.*

Letter 4

Left Turn/Right Turn

Ecclesiastes 10:2

*‘A Wise man’s heart directs him toward the right,
but the foolish man’s heart directs him toward the left.’*

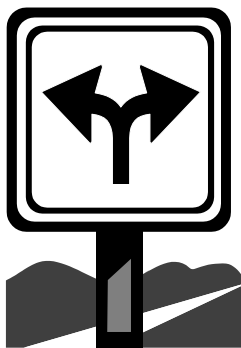
I had the privilege of leading in a teaching called Left Turn, Right Turn. It helped me to see that I had wanted to trust God but was trying to do it on my own. What that lesson showed me was that I had two questions to answer and I was only answering one of them.

The first question – “Was God speaking to my heart and giving me something He wanted me to do or be involved in” (and I had to answer that question)? I say without bragging that most times when I felt God directing me my answer was, ‘Yes, Lord, that’s what I want to do’. But what I didn’t discover for years was that the next question and next answer were even more important than the first. And that was “How are you going to do it, Charlie?”

My initial response for that was I know what God wants me to do, here I go. I began to learn that as God put areas in my life He wanted me to be involved in that the only way I could do it was go back to Him and say, ‘Lord, I cannot do this, I’m trusting you to do it through me’.

And that’s what left turn – right turn was all about. Everything I do must flow from my personal relationship with God and trusting Him and Him alone. I must be learning the difference between obeying what God said and obeying God, the God who said it.

I must focus on trusting God to do His will through me more than for me to have to 'do it'. When I get to saying 'I see what God wants and I will do it, I'm getting ahead of God. So in essence, the Left Turn is knowing or thinking I know God's direction for my life and going on my own to do it. Where Right Turn is knowing or thinking I know God's direction for my life and turning to Him and acknowledging that I cannot do it, but I will trust Him to do it through me and step out in faith.



Which way do I go???

Letter 5

Watered Down Testimony

Ephesians 4: 15

‘...speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ’

II Timothy 4:2

‘preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.’

There was a situation that came up in my life, not too long ago, when I was challenged that what I was teaching and what I was proclaiming did not fit with the doctrine of some of the people who were there and I shouldn’t do that. I really took that seriously and I thought about it and prayed about it and I even came very close to quit sharing with that particular group the things that God had put in my life and in my heart. But I was fortunate enough to read an article, I don’t remember where it was or who wrote it, but basically what it said was, ‘That there comes a danger of us allowing what someone else says to us to cause us to get off the track that God has put us on. In order to do that I won’t tell other people the whole truth as God has revealed it to me; I won’t say that I’m delivered from all sin or that I’m sanctified completely, (wholly the Bible says) – that is too rugged for some people, it will offend them. So what I’ll do is cover up the vital testimony of my life and say that I’m just religiously inclined and then I will be able to persevere with my influence with these people.’

The testimony of my life must be unmistakably to the whole of the truth, not a part of it only.

Part of the truth is no truth at all.

But on the same token as we share the truth as we know it, we need to trust God that if others don't believe exactly as I do they are not the enemy or are not necessarily wrong.

Keep the main thing the main thing, "Christ and Christ alone!" Let Him deal with all the doctrinal issues and you love your brothers.

I Corinthians 13:12,13 "For now I see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face, now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three, but the greatest of these is love."

Can I love my brother even when I don't agree with him on doctrine?

Letter 6

Differences Complement

Luke 9:49, 50

‘John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow along with us.” But Jesus said to him, “Do not hinder him; for he who is not against you is for you.”’

Romans 8:1

‘Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.’

As I read the book of Romans it tells me that I need to start by knowing my sin is forgiven. Well how do I know? Is it because of what my pastor says, or because of all the books I read or from the words from the Bible? Yes, but only when God through His Spirit takes His truth and plants it in my heart. Then I know because God puts it in my heart and once God has done this it is finished.

If you were to ask a number of Christians how and when this occurred for them you would hear that it happened in many ways; as you listen to their experiences of knowing how they really got to know God. The sad thing about this is that too often these Christians are using this special and personal experience of knowing to attack and fight other Christians or other denominations to get them to comply with their way.

When will I trust God enough that I no longer see these different experiences and/or doctrines as dividing us because of our differences, but instead seeing them as God using them to complete what we believe and allowing us all

to worship God as He has directed us and using all of our differences for His kingdom here on earth?
Mark 9:38-41



Give God Your Bouquet

II Corinthians 9: 6-8

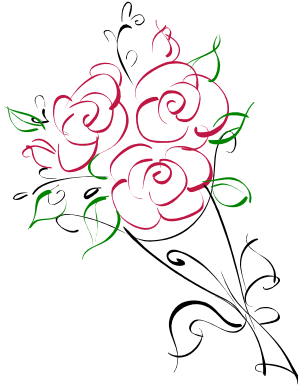
'Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver, and God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed.'

Usually when we speak about giving it relates to money. However, God's word teaches me to reap joy by giving time, talent and treasure. Giving is not a sacrifice, it's a joy. II Corinthians 9:6-8 says 'Decide if you are going to give, either bountifully or sparingly'. We must make that decision with joy of giving, not under the compulsion of the necessity to give. It touches God's heart when I give cheerfully. And God is able to give me all I need to give and all that God gives me the desire to give.

A small lesson on giving to God was shared at a Gary Smalley couples conference many, many years ago. Gary told us how difficult it was for him as he was becoming more and more well known in the Christian community through his seminars and books. He tells how when people thanked or praised him for the impact that his teaching had on them he would not receive it with grace, but would try to explain that it was God not him. One day God spoke to his heart and told him to receive the gift from them and in his heart see it as a long stem rose and, at the end of each day, lay your flower or flowers at the feet of Jesus as a love gift for all He's doing in and through your life. If you choose to keep them they just dry up and die.

Oswald Chambers says 'whenever you get a blessing from God give it back to him as a love gift. Another of the

lessons that God is teaching me is that I (we) need to learn to thank God for what He has already done more than to ask him to do it again. Ephesians 1:3, 4



*The Lord looks at my heart, not my actions.
Proverbs 16:2; 21:2*

Letter 8

Footprints in the Sand

John 14:20

'In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.'

Habakkuk 3: 18, 19

'Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places.'

God made our feet like hinds feet. What does that mean? An animal that has hind's feet lives in high dangerous places; when he finds a safe place to step with his front feet his hind feet step in that exact place. Christ in us is the same for us; as we walk with Him He leads us to walk in His footprints. He is always there; we can choose to walk with Him.

I remember the first time I saw a picture of footprints in the sand and I thought what a beautiful concept that is of God being there when you need Him. But over the course of time God has shown me a different perspective; it's still a beautiful picture but now as I see that picture I say it's doctrinally off base. Because God is never alongside me or in front of me or behind me – God resides within me and there is always only one set of footprints. Jesus is not only above me, in front of me, or behind me, He is in me, the hope of glory.

Deuteronomy 31:6

Hebrews 13:5

Matthew 28: 19, 20

Mind Can Conceive-Believe

Genesis 11:6

'The LORD said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.'

Proverbs 3: 5, 6

'Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.'

Many years ago I read a book on success called *'Think and Grow Rich.'* And from my perspective the message was that anything the mind can conceive and believe the mind can achieve. This is the message I saw throughout the book.

I always thought that was a worldly perspective of being rich, making a lot of money, but I began to discover that the Bible is probably where the author got his theory and so in the right situations this is the truth. God says in Proverbs 23:7 'As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.' He also says in Genesis 11:6 'Behold they are all one people and they all have the same language and this is what they have begun to do; now nothing which they prepare and do will be impossible for them.' But you see the Bible doesn't say God can't stop them and He did. That's where we got the tower of Babel, where God made it impossible for the people to talk to one another, to communicate what they were thinking and what they were doing, so they could accomplish nothing.

That's what happens to me as a Christian when I get ahead of God. I start trying to put my thoughts into process; so day by day God continues to teach me to trust Him, to walk with Him and to let Him walk through me.

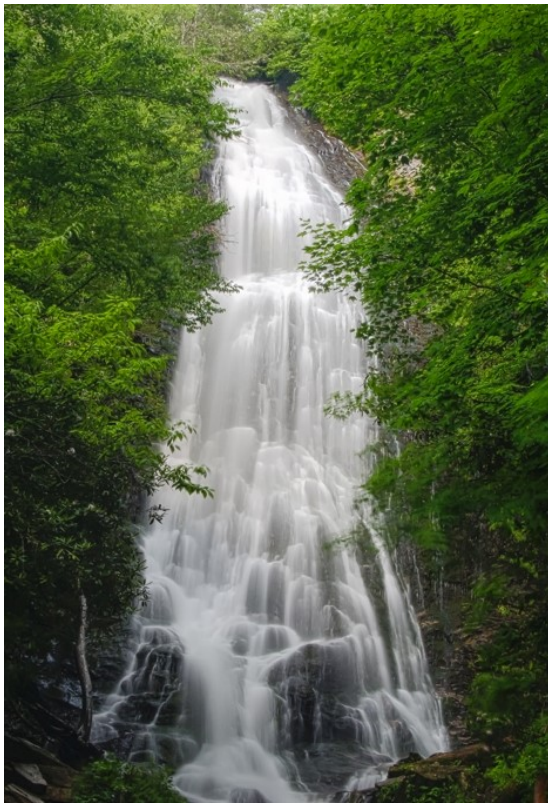
Letter 10

One Liners

Here are several little one-liners that have blessed me and continue to bless me. I hope they bless you.

- Faith is not that I see God but that I know God sees me.
- Beware of trusting in your trust and see that you trust in the Lord.
- Beware of trusting in your faith instead of on whom your faith is based.
- No man can really believe God unless God is in him.
- Don't try to make room for God, but believe that He has made room for you.
- I once read that the most important single ingredient to a successful marriage is walking together with God and each of you having a desire within you to make the marriage work.
- The good news is 'that he who knows me best is the same one who loves me the best.' Thank you, Lord.
- Your dollars help make a ministry possible, your prayers make it profitable.
- Obedience is never a sacrifice
- The world says seeing is believing, God says believing is seeing.
- I must continue to learn to doubt my doubts and believe my beliefs, not vice versa!
- Getting married: Men believe women won't change and women believe they can change the man.
- Is my relationship with Christ based on Him or on His blessings?
- It's not what I say, but exactly what I say.

- D.L Moody – ‘How dare you speak to men about God before you speak to God about men.’
- Get your ‘but’ out of the way.
- The definition of a hard heart: A hard heart is ‘over exposed and under response to the truth.’



Letter 11

To the Men God Has Put Into My life II Corinthians 5: 14, 15

'For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.'

Fellows,

God is searching for a man. He's not looking for men but He's looking for a man, personal and intimate.

- I Samuel 13:14 says 'The Lord sought Himself a man after His own heart.'
- In Jeremiah 4:25 he said, 'I looked and there was no man.'
- Jeremiah 5:1 he said, 'Roam to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem (St. Charles) and look now and take note and see in her open squares if you can find a man. If there is one who does justice, who seeks truth then I will pardon her.'
- Ezekiel 22:30 'I searched for a man among them that would build up the wall and stand in the gap before me for the land (St. Charles) so that I would not destroy it but I found no one.'

I personally believe the issue God has had with men for all the decades we could go back to, has been that men wanted to trust God, but they wanted to do it on their time frame and in their way. One of my favorite scriptures is in Exodus 23 where God is laying out for the people what He has prepared for them. He's sharing this with Moses, Joshua and all the Jewish people who are there, saying in vs. 20

‘Behold I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.’

I know I overdo these sometimes, but I believe God is speaking to you and to me in that verse about His desire for us. In fact, my verse says ‘Charlie, behold I’m going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.’

Then He goes on for the next seven or eight verses talking about all the adversity that these people are going to be faced with; difficult things. But then He gets to vs. 29 & 30 which tie it all together. He says, ‘I will not drive them out before you in a single year because the land would become desolate and the beast of the field would become too numerous for you; but I will drive them out before you little by little until you become fruitful and take possession of the land’. I believe that time frame He gave there and the action He gave is what making disciple makers is all about. Am I willing to trust God over the course of many, many years, maybe beyond my years, to accomplish what He wants to accomplish in order to get His people where He wants them to be? And He can indeed find that man.

We have the privilege of knowing that man is in the Lord Jesus Christ and He is in the process of conforming us into His image.

Letter 12

God Isn't Going to Help Me...

Philippians 4: 13

'I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.'

John 15:5

'I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.'

Romans 8:29

'For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.'

The first sentence in one of Miles Stanford's chapters in "The Principles of Spiritual Growth" sets many men into a defensive position. He says, 'God did not help you become a Christian and He does not intend to help you live the Christian life.'

Usually their first response is if God won't help me, I can't do it. Well they are correct in one way, but way off base in the other.

If you think about your entry into God's family when you became a follower of Christ, it was probably much like mine. The more the Holy spirit convicted me and drew me to Jesus the more willing I became to follow Him. So I would ask 'What do you want me to do', and I would get no answer. This would frustrate me and I would think of more things I could do to be accepted in the beloved; but the more I tried the more I felt left behind. Finally, in utter frustration I gave up; I told God I just couldn't do it, and He spoke to my heart and said, 'well done my son, I have

already done all that is necessary for you at the cross; you need to do nothing but receive my free gift and it is yours.’ That day I did and, good to His Word, God adopted me as His child.

My next great struggle though was to trust Him in my walk with Him in the same way to do nothing apart from Him. I tried very diligently to do as much as I could to develop new godly habits and turn from the ungodly acts in my life. I began to see change, but not to have real peace. However, the Holy Spirit continued to speak to my heart and to draw me to God’s Word where I began to see that ‘apart from Christ I could do nothing’ but that ‘I can do all things through Christ Jesus who lives in me.’

This is not just a mind game, this to me is practicing the presence of God; it is praying without ceasing; it is loving God with all my heart, and all my soul and all my mind. It is trusting Him and realizing that I died at Calvary and now it is no longer I who lives, but Christ Jesus who lives in me and the life I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

What God is teaching me through Miles Stanford’s statement is that God has done all, both to bring me to Himself and to keep me to Himself. He is conforming me to the image of Christ. Rom. 8:29

Letter 13

God Has Done It for Me

Romans 7: 24, 25

‘Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.’

Watchmen Nee, in his book on Romans, “*The Normal Christian Life*” and Miles Stanford in his book, “*The Principles of Spiritual Growth*” shared these truths to me over the past forty years and I’m still learning what they say. They both quote something that most, if not all, Christians say a number of times in their lives, which is, ‘I have died with Christ and I am raised with Him, I’ve given myself completely over to Him forever.’ Therefore, now I must do something for Him since He has done so much for me. That sounds so good but what am I really saying? What I’m learning from the bible and from what I’m taught from other people, is that in reality what I’m saying is that I will step away from God’s grace and put myself back under the law, not the end of it.

Grace means that God does something for me; law means I try to do something for God. God has certain holy and righteous demands which He places upon me – that is law. Now if law means that God requires something from me for their fulfillment, and deliverance from law means that He no longer requires that from me but He Himself provides the way. Law implies that God requires me to do something for Him; deliverance implies that He exempted me from

doing it, and that is grace. He does it Himself. I need to do nothing for God, which is deliverance from law.

The trouble in Romans 7 is that man in the flesh tried to do something for God. As soon as I try to please God in that way then I place myself back under the law and the experience of Romans 7 begins to be mine.

One of the many beauties of the difference of living in Christ versus under the Law is that the law makes demands on us and leaves us helpless to fulfill them; whereas Christ makes demands, but He Himself fulfills in us the very demand He made. Christ tells me in Matt. 5:18 that not one jot or tittle of the law will pass away, so if the law will not die, I must, in order to be no longer under its power. That is the essence of being born again. I am no longer under the law but I'm alive in Christ. Sin is still alive but Christ is my life.

God began to bring this teaching back to my mind and my heart around a year ago and I shared it with a number of men. It went something like this. I sensed God speaking to me and saying 'Charlie, I have some requirements for your life, and I asked Him, 'what are they?' He said 'I require you to be perfect; to love Tammy and others, even yourself, unconditionally.' I responded 'Lord, I've tried but I can't.' He said, 'Good, my son, I know that and so I have done it for you. It is done and it is finished for you in Christ Jesus.

The major difference of living under the Law or by Grace is that, because of Christ, God isn't mad at me anymore.
(Hal Lindsey)

Four Stages of Love

I John 4: 17

‘By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.’

I remember reading John Claypool’s book, “*The Light Within*”, where he shared how his teacher in seminary told them about the four stages of love that most of us go through in our walk with Christ.

1. The love of self for self’s sake.

We are like little children; we live like everything revolves around us. He mentions that, for most of us, we don’t stay there long as we begin to progress into stage number two.

2. The love of God for self sake.

When we find God and our lives become the love of God for self sake; we treat God like He is our bellhop in the sky – give me this, help me here, help me there. Claypool shares that many of us never get beyond this stage, but those that do go to stage number three and this is where he and I both thought should be the top stage...

3. The love of God for God’s sake.

That is where we look to God and worship Him and love Him. But he shared number four, which I really had to ponder to catch the wisdom in it...

4. The love of self for self sake.

He gave several examples; one was from the book of John where John identifies himself as he writes and he calls himself, 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' The author and I have always thought that John had too high of an opinion of himself, but in reality John had it right – Jesus loves him just as he is, just where he is, just who he is. God made him and God loves him, and if I'm ever going to trust God and let Him have His way in me, I must love myself. Many times in the bible when God tells me how to love one another; how to love my neighbor; how to love my wife, etc., it is always that we love them as we love ourselves. I must see God in me and let His love flow through me.

*'Let them see your good works and glorify your
Father which is in heaven.'*

Matthew 5:16

Letter 15

Shadow **Exodus 15: 2**

'The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise Him; my father's God, and I will extol Him.'

Isn't it strange how many different ways God speaks to our hearts? One that really got my attention was when we had to put our dog Shadow to sleep.

After working with the vet for some time and trying a number of different treatments to cure him, it was determined that he would never have a normal life again, so the decision was made to have him put to sleep.

I knew how hard this would be for Tammy, so I took him to the vet and had him put to sleep. That was not a fun thing in any way, shape or form.

The next morning as I was driving to a meeting, and praying for my day, God spoke to my heart about Shadow. He reminded me how the days I was home early in the morning, sitting in my recliner reading and praying. The first thing Shadow would do when he woke up was to run up the stairs and jump in my lap and let me know he cared for me. When I came home during the day no matter what time it was he met me at the door and greeted me with joy.

On the day I took him to the vet to be put to sleep, he did whatever I asked him to do on the way there, thru the final check up and even thru the final act.

Those thoughts showed me how much he loved me, and even more than that, how much he trusted me. I could almost hear God speaking to me and my thoughts went to, how do I approach God every morning when I wake up or during the day as I work thru my schedule, or how about when there is a step of faith into an area where I don't want to go; do I trust Him; do I trust Him in the same way Shadow trusted me, even if that way meant me dying to self.

That few minutes I spent reliving that with God has really helped me to realize the importance that I began learning a long time ago, that I need to practice the presence of God in everything I do, and I need to trust Him with all my heart, all my soul and all my mind. I thank God that He is so patient as He teaches me how to do that.

But the thing I'm most grateful for is that my love and faithfulness for God is not what our relationship is built on; it is His great love for me and His unending faithfulness to complete what He began.

Letter 16

Ideas Bigger Than Your Life

Ephesians 1: 3, 4

*'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the
heavenly places in Christ.'*

These words impacted my life.

How then shall we live? *Taken from a book by Francis Schaffer.*

I then shall live as one forgiven,

I then will walk with joy to know my debt is paid.

I then will know my name is clear before my Father,

I then will know I am His child and I am not afraid.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,

I can forgive my brothers.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,

The law of love I will gladly obey.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,

I'm learning compassion.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,

I've been so loved that I'll risk loving you.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,

I know how fear builds walls instead of bridges.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,

I'll dare to see another's point of view.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,

I realize that relationships demand commitment.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,

I will be there to care and to follow through.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,
I pray for God's Kingdom to come around & thru
and in me.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,
Your hallowed name, Oh may I bear with honor.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,
May your living kingdom come down on me.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,
The bread of life, Oh may I share with honor.

Because I'm greatly pardoned,
May You feed a hungry world thru me.

II Thessalonians 2: 16-17

Words taken from Gloria Gaither.



Letter 17

Barnabas **Psalm 126:5, 6**

‘Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.’

I remember when God was directing my life to leave the business world and accept an opportunity to go on staff with a business men’s ministry I had been very involved in for over ten years.

As I met with a number of different men to get their counsel on what I was thinking about and praying about, a couple of these meetings stand out to me today.

The first one was three men that I trusted to tell me what they were hearing as they spoke to others about this change in my life. They told me that it wouldn’t work because of a lack of money and the lack of wanting for a director for the Metro St. Louis ministry. Normally I would have said, ‘Well that settles it, it won’t work.’ But I came away from that meeting thanking God that, if it was going to work, He would have to do it. I didn’t totally understand at that time, and still really don’t, how important that choice was in my life, as much later He gave me the desire to continue to do things that were guaranteed to fail unless He did it.

Another man I met with was Max Webb, a long time friend of mine from Kansas City, whom I would report to if I became Metro Director for St. Louis. Max took me to Psalm 126: 5, 6 and asked me to read it. When I finished he

asked me, ‘When was the last time you wept for a man?’
As we talked and prayed together about what those verses say, I began to realize that God had not given me the gift of tears but He had given me a heart for men. That was such a great time.

Who do you have in your life that will tell you the truth and love you?

Do you have any Barnabas’ in your life? Are you a Barnabas in someone else’s life?



Letter 18

The Great Commission

Matthew 28: 19, 20

‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’

Proverbs 27: 17

‘Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.’

What does the great commission communicate to you?

Many Christians see it as going out and winning the world for Christ. That may be what it says, but for the most part, as I see this played out in the lives of many Christians, they would say it is leading people to Christ; although many, if not most, avoid the action Christ speaks of in Matt. 28: 19, 20.

The key things He mentions are

1. To make disciples (where? – the whole world)
2. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
3. Teach them. (What? – to obey all that He has commanded us to obey) In other words, let’s pay it forward.

Let’s quickly look again at these commands and do so through the perspective of discipleship, not evangelism.

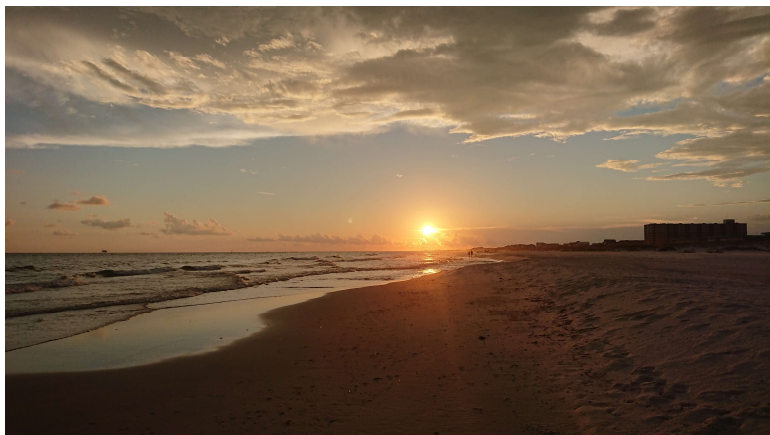
He tells us to make disciples, this seems pretty clear. Once a person becomes a follower of Christ this should start at once. This may sound strange to you, but it is God that

brings a man into His kingdom and He has given to us the joy of discipling them.

He tells us to baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. We baptize believers, not prospects.

He tells us to teach them, not just information, but to teach them how to obey His commandments. That's for Christians not the lost.

When I look at the great commission, what I see is God wants to prepare His people to prepare His people. And that's why what Christ did with His disciples, to teach them to disciple, is what He wants to put into our lives for us to share with others.



Letter 20

We Are Not Called to Success but to Faithfulness

Luke 10: 20

‘Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.’

How often do you evaluate your walk with God on the success that you see in your life; or the failure that you see in your life?

I’m learning to trust Him and follow Him instead of trying to impress Him. His will is accomplished in my life. His name is exalted in my life and His glory is magnified in my life. I want my life to show that I’ve given everything to God because He is fully trustworthy. Nothing under His control can ever be out of control, including me.

When the Lord sent out the disciples without Him the first time, they came back just hilarious over their success. “Lord, even the devils are subject to us through your Name.” That was all they thought about. Jesus said to them, “Don’t rejoice in successful service, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” We are not called to success but to faithfulness.

Jesus asks us to be willing to go the second mile. It’s never our duty to do it, if we make it our duty we have put ourselves back under bondage.

It is never our duty to go the second mile, or to turn the other cheek, but it is what we will do if we trust Him to do it through us.

How often I say I can't do that, or I can't do this, because I have my eyes on me instead of on Him. What a blessing it is when I thank God and step out in faith with Him.

A friend of mine called me one day and wanted me to answer a question for him. His son-in-law, whom he was meeting with in discipleship, had moved to another city and he asked a mutual friend of ours in that city if he would meet with his son-in-law. Several weeks later he called our friend and asked him how it was going. Our friend said he was still checking him out to see if he was a faithful man.

His question to me was 'how do I see that'. I told him that I was taught that was the way to do it, and for many years practiced it, but for the last few years God has been showing me that making faithful men was His job, not mine. My focus should be for me to be faithful and to trust God in my life and the life of a man I meet with.

I must doubt my doubts and believe my beliefs.

Letter 21

Pure Faith Sees God Alone

Ephesians 1: 18, 19

‘I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with working of the strength of His might.’

Many years ago, I was encouraged to read a devotional book called, “*Let Go*”. It was a number of letters, written by Archbishop Fenelon, to encourage people God had put into his life. In one of these letters, I really began the process of learning how to walk by faith and not by sight. A paraphrase of the poem he shared said, “The man who looks at a glass, on it he may keep his eye, or if he chooses, look through the glass and see the creation of God.” As I began to work through what God was teaching me with this poem, I began to look through a large window in my office and I saw how easy it was to see all the imperfections in the glass, and just see them. As I chose to look thru the glass, how easy it was to see through it and not at the glass anymore, and to see God’s great creation.

As I’m learning to walk by faith, I see the same process in my life. If I see myself or my circumstances, that’s all I can see. But if I trust God and look to Him I experience His love, His joy, His peace. But He always leaves the choice to me. He’s always there; it’s my choice to see Him or my circumstances.

Eyes that look are common. Eyes that see are rare.

The Pharisees looked at Peter and saw only a poor illiterate fisherman, totally insignificant, not worthy of a second look. Jesus sees Peter and discovered the prophet and preacher, the saint and leader of a unique band of men who turned the world upside down.

What do you see when you look at yourself (or what do you see when you look at others in your life)? What does God see when He looks at you and those that He's put into your life?



Letter 22

Be Still and Know That I AM God!

Psalm 23: 4

'Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.'

Do you ever think it is strange that we are on the go so much to serve and follow God? And yet in so many places in the scripture it wasn't until they were forced by God to be still and know that He is God and to let Him use them where and how they were?

- Moses - forty years in Midian as God prepared him for His work. Then forty years with rebellious people.
- Daniel - in the lions den and a slave
- Nehemiah - as a wine tester
- Job - lost everything but God
- David - anointed king but had to wait years to sit on the throne
- Joseph - in the pit – a slave – in prison falsely accused
- Paul - in prison- being stoned
- Jonah - in a fish
- Hosea - in a marriage that should never work
- Habakkuk - his prayers were answered different from how he intended
- Onesimus - in jail with Paul, a slave on the run.

Do you see a pattern? God is teaching me that it is almost, if not always, that I grow when I quit trying to do things for God, and to trust God to do things through me, and this

almost always again happens when I run into a brick wall in my life of doing.

The Lord tells me in the bible to trust Him, and He wants to teach me and to bless me in any and every situation. Whatever He allows in my life, can I trust Him?

You can't change yesterday, but you can ruin today by worrying about tomorrow.



Letter 23

Live for the Moment

Philippians 1: 21

‘For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.’

I remember reading a short note by Helen Mallicoat.

She said:

I was regretting the past and fearing the future.
Suddenly my Lord was speaking to me. “My Name is I AM” He paused, I waited. He continued, “When you live in the past with its mistakes and regrets it is hard “I AM” not there. My Name is not “I WAS.”
When you live in the future with its problems and fearing that it’s going to be hard “I AM” not there; My Name is not “I WILL BE. When you live in the moment, it is not hard. “I AM” there, My Name is “I AM.”

As I read that it gave me a couple of thoughts. One was that, in all the circumstances of life, you will find you have the perfections of Jesus Christ, not at your back, NO but dwelling within you.

What do you do to earn a gift? Nothing! God tells us to take it. If we have the slightest remnant of thinking we can earn it, we will never take it. If we are quite certain we do not deserve it, then we can take it.

Then the sanctification process begins in our life. It is not power to live like Jesus, it is Christ living in me, and it is His life that is seen, but it is only seen as by faith, I walk in the light.

Real life in Christ is to remember that it is God who engineers my circumstances, and that the only place where I can be of any use to Him is where I am, not where I'm not or where I want to be.



Letter 24

Trusting God

John 15:5

'I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.'

Philippians 4:13

'I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.'

The obstacles in my life stop being obstacles as I begin to trust, not in what God is going to do, but what He has already done. "It is finished."

I began to learn to rest only in Him and none in me. He told me in John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in My Father and you are in Me and I am in you." Do I really believe and trust in the truth that God has already made provision for every situation I will ever face! He is there and I am in Him. I am a child of the living God, anything that comes against me must come thru the Son, and then the Father, and if they allow it thru them, it finds that I am in Him. Romans 8:31 says, "If God is for me who can be against me?" Galatians 2:20 "It is no longer I but Christ in me." Col. 1:27, "Which is Christ in me the hope of glory."

I know these truths in my head, but too often I let my circumstances and/or feelings, control my life and convince me that Christ is either not there or He can't help me if He is there.

I need to go back to how I was made right with God in the first place; not by doing anything at all, but by accepting the fact that the Lord had done it all – everything. Resting

in Christ for sanctification; becoming more and more like Jesus Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. Not by what I do or don't do. Sanctification is the same process, it becomes mine in the same way, not by my doing anything myself, but by putting my faith in what the Lord Jesus has already done. All I need to do is trust Him. I want to come to the point where I say 'Lord, I am unable to do anything for You, but I trust You to do everything in me.'

Ephesians 1:3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of the Lord Jesus who has (already) blessed me with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.'

It's not about doing nothing, it's about trusting Him to do His work through me.



Letter 25

Some Thoughts on Marriage

Proverbs 18:22

*'He who finds a wife finds a good thing,
and obtains favor from the Lord.'*

If we go back to the first few chapters of Genesis, we see two very wrong choices men often make in their walk with God, and in their marriage.

In Genesis 3:6 we see Eve being tempted. Where's Adam? If you read the verse you see he is right there, but instead of protecting her, he chooses to be passive and says nothing. After the sin is committed by both, who does Adam blame for the sin? Genesis 6:12 says he blamed God. At least two powerful lessons here: 1. Be bold in the Lord and protect your wife; 2. Assume responsibility when you have made the wrong choice, confess it, and walk with God.

Right after I trusted Christ and became a believer, I was told that Tammy (my wife) and I should have a quiet time together; she had become a Christian a few months before I did. So I initiated a 6:00 a.m. bible study with her. I found she had a hard time getting with it at that time of day (she was not a morning person). I assumed she wasn't very spiritual.

Years later I was asked a question by a man at a men's retreat, that I'd never heard before, which helped me see a large part of our failed quiet time. His question was, "How long after your wedding was it before you stopped making single decisions." I thought about that a lot before I answered, and a lot more since. I still make too many

decisions that impact both of our lives without first conferring with her, but God is really working on this in my life.

When I'm asking for forgiveness and at the same time giving reasons and/or excuses for my behavior, I'm really not asking for forgiveness. Am I willing to give up 'my rights' and just ask for forgiveness? God tells me dead men have no rights.

Many of us still believe a lie that our wives and our family only need the resources we provide for them. What they need more than resources is the security that we can bring into their lives by really being involved in their lives, and being a godly husband and father.

Your wife is a gift from God. Proverbs 14.



Letter 26

Get Your But Out of the Way

For quite some time now I've been saying that one day I would write a book and title it, 'Get Your But Out of the Way.'

But as I started to write, it dawned on me that getting the But out of the way wouldn't work unless I got the Butt out of the way first.

As a young man, married to a beautiful woman, father of three great sons (soon to be four), living in our dream home, doing well in my job; all the things I thought would bring me peace and happiness - But I wasn't happy or at peace. I was struggling with God. I had known of Him as far back as I could remember, But I didn't know Him; I didn't know I could know Him. But I knew I wasn't good enough. I was very active in my church, But I knew that wasn't enough, was it?

But God, I'm doing the best I can, much better than my past behavior. As I struggled with God I began to learn that He doesn't grade me on a scale with everyone else; He is an equal opportunity God. He says all have sinned and come short the glory of God.

But Lord, I'm doing my best. He said 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Light. No man comes to the Father apart from Me.'

But God, I'm trying to do and be my best. God showed me where He said, 'It is appointed unto man once to die, and then the judgment.' But Lord, by then it's too late. He said, "To as many as received Him, He gave the right to become the sons of God, even to those who believe in His name."

But God, how do I do that? You don't Charlie, I did it for you; all you have to do is get your Butt out of the way and all your other Buts will have been taken away. I have done for you all that you cannot do; come unto me and find the joy and peace you seek.

But Lord, I'm not worthy. Christ is. Lord, I will stumble and fail, Christ won't.

But Lord, can it be that simple and easy? Charlie, it cost me My Son!

As I gave myself to Him, He first took my Butt out of the way, and for all these years, little by little, He is taking my Buts away too.

Letter 27

God's Place in My Life

Colossians 3: 4

'When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.'

I often get strange responses from people when I make the following comment, but I believe it with all my heart.

“God does not desire to be my number one priority.”

Often, as we evaluate our lives, especially when we include God in that evaluation, we automatically put God first. This sounds so right. However, when I start putting my priorities in line, I ask myself which is the most important and how much of my life will I give to it. If, as most Christians, I say God is #1, how much of my life should I give Him? I do need time for my other priorities. The more I learn to trust God, the more He shows me. He doesn't want to be a priority in my life; He wants to be my life. Then, as I outline my priorities, He flows out of each one. He is in charge of my life, I'm not. If I have my priorities out of whack, He will straighten them out.

At the moment of my salvation, I died to who I was and God took over my life. He made me a new creation, still with a freedom to choose, but now having God in Christ by the Holy Spirit in my life to direct me, until He calls me home.

God is not a priority in my life, He is my life!

Letter 28

**For Every Beast of the Forest is Mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.**

Psalms 50: 10

*'For every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a
thousand hills.'*

There's a great story about when Dr. Ironsides was the President of Dallas Theological Seminary in their early stages. They were in a financial emergency and had only a number of days to make a very large payment or lose the facility to foreclosure.

As Dr. Ironsides was praying with a number of other leaders from his board of directors, he prayed, 'Father, I know you own the cattle on a thousand hills, would You please sell a few, we need the money.' (or a prayer very close to this one).

Just after he prayed, his secretary came in and apologized for interrupting their prayer time, but there was a man in the office who came in and said he had just brought a train load of cattle into town and sold them, and God directed him to give the money to Dallas Theological Seminary.

Do we believe God answers prayer?

Can we be that specific when we pray?

Letter 29

Would You Lend Me Your Faith?

Matthew 5:16

‘Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven’

I have a friend, I haven’t seen in many years, who used to attend a bible study in our home. His name is Ed, and I know he was coming more because of a young lady who came to the bible study.

He always listened very intently, but very seldom participated. One evening, as we were discussing salvation, he made a very unusual statement. In essence, what he said was, ‘Charlie, I can see that you are a man of deep faith, but I’m not. If I had your faith I could believe as you do.

As I look back now I believe the Holy Spirit lead me to my response to him. I said, ‘Ed, if I lend you my faith would you receive Christ?’ He looked very surprised and asked ‘Would you do that?’ And I said yes. Ed came to Christ that evening and his life changed forever.

I’ve never heard a story like that before or since, but then I thought about the time Ron Fisher came to my house and shared the Word of God with me. I too, by faith, came to Christ, and at the time it was more faith in Ron than anything else. I know this sounds strange, but yes, I put my faith in Christ but Christ used the faith of Ron to convey it to me.

Letter 30

One of My Favorite Verses

Judges 20:15 – 17

‘From the cities on that day the sons of Benjamin were numbered, 26,000 men who draw the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah who were numbered, 700 choice men. Out of all these people 700 choice men were left-handed; each one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss. Then the men of Israel besides Benjamin were numbered, 400,000 men who draw the sword; all these were men of war.’

If you have been around me very long I’m sure you’ve heard me say, ‘this or that verse is one of my favorites’. I say this about quite a few verses. These seem to get the most confused looks as any others; those who hear them wonder ‘What are these verses saying?’

Basically, they say that there were 400,000 men of war in Israel, and 700 of them were left handed and could sling a stone at a hair and never miss.

As I read these verses one day, I had a picture of Goliath as he challenged the army of the ‘Living God’ and fear froze them all. But God chose David, and you should know the rest of the story.

But, as I saw it that day, God was saying to me there are always men who can physically do more and are better than you. When God chose David he had some expertise with a sling, but he also had a great heart for God. He was not chosen because of his skill, but for his heart. There were

700 left handed men who were better with a sling, but God chose David's heart.

When God gives us things to do or say, He is looking at our heart. He will apply all the skills we need.

When we are forced to articulate what we are learning, it is the first step of commitment towards what we are expressing.

What Are Some Ways to ‘Minister to Men?’

Matthew 5:16

‘Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.’

One of the mentors God put into my life was Ted DeMoss. I began to learn many things from him. One was to think lost. He explained that I need to remember how I lived and thought before I became a Christian. So often we come to Christ, and then expect our former friends and co-workers to understand the new lifestyle I’m learning, as well as a new language. Wait for God to open the door to share, and to open their eyes and ears.

Recently, a study on evangelism taught us to walk across the room. The context was to pray, and then approach men to get to know them and to begin building a friendship relationship not with the intent of saving them. Leave that to God.

I remember when we were in the process of moving to St. Charles. We purchased a lot and were having our home built on it. It seemed like everyday we would drop by and see how they were progressing. We also prayed for our future neighbors even though we had not met any yet. As the time to move in came very close, I made a comment to Tammy that, ‘I couldn’t wait until we moved in and we could start practicing ‘Lifestyle Evangelism’. She looked at me, as only she can do, and said, ‘I don’t want to practice L.S.E. I want to be their friends.

That’s exactly what ministry to men should be in our lives. Not a program, but a relationship, not looking for results, but expressing God’s love to those He puts in our life, and leaving the results to Him, and praising Him whether you see the results or not.

We Plant and Water, But It's God Who Gives the Increase

A lady I know from church asked me one Sunday if I was still involved in a men's ministry. When I told her I was she gave me the name of a downtown businessman and asked me if I would contact him. Well, that was something I loved doing. Soon after I called him and invited him to an outreach meeting in downtown St. Louis.

I did not know that this man was the ladies son-in-law and that her entire family was praying that he would come to Christ.

Well, we went to lunch and nothing seemed to have happened. I invited him to a one on one lunch and again he agreed to go. As we chatted and discussed the first lunch we went to, he expressed his ill feeling about religion and church but to my surprise, he agreed (for his son's sake) to meet with me and discuss the bible. One thing he told me that shocked me was that, prior to getting married he told his wife 'to be' that his business and his role in it were the most important things in his life, even beyond her.

God moved very swiftly in his life, and he became a Christian in just a matter of weeks and he was growing like wildfire.

After the first four or five weeks we met, we had a verse or two we would memorize each week. Several weeks into this part of our sessions, for no apparent reason his boss from corporate showed up and told him he was being relieved from his management role. To say the least he was devastated, and one of his first thoughts was to call his mentor (me) for help. This was before cell phones and I was out of town. He wasn't sure where to go. Then the Lord brought to his mind the verses we had just

memorized, Proverbs 3: 5, 6, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; acknowledge Him in all your ways and He will direct your path.”

When I got back, he called and filled me in on all that happened. He said that everyone in his office, including himself, were astonished at his response and reaction to losing what he had held so high.

We both learned a great number of things as we lived out this story. Through a series of events, over just a few months we saw the impact God has on our lives as we begin to learn and practice the truths He is teaching us, and the most important one is, how faithful He is.

It was good that I wasn't there; I didn't have to be there when the crisis occurred, God was there and that's who he turned to, and is still doing so today after about 30 years.



Letter 33

II Timothy 2:2

‘The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.’

Three principles to learn!

#1 Matthew 7:21-23

#2 Mark 1:13; I Cor. 10:13

#3 Matthew 5:8

#1

A major area we share with men in “Ministry to Men” is to first know the difference between sharing what you know from your life experience, versus sharing theory that has been handed down by others who have not experienced the things they are sharing.

Christ cannot be a theory in your life; He must be in your life because of a life changing experience of knowing Him.
I John 5:11-13

We can read many books (the Bible included) that tell us how to live, but if we share what we’ve heard or read without experiencing it, it is just information. Remember, it is the practice of walking in the knowledge that God gives me, (which He desires), it is not just for me to have and develop theories on how it would work. Watchman Nee said, ‘All knowledge is the result of obedience, everything else is just information.’

#2

A major step in our walk with Christ is when the Holy Spirit teaches us that temptation is not a sin, unless we allow it to become one. When we are tempted, we have the opportunity to choose to sin, but we also have the opportunity to do the right thing and trust God.

#3

When we choose to set apart a time in our lives to meet with God for prayer and mediation (often called a quiet time), we need to make sure we are meeting with God and not with our quiet time. Don't get caught in the rut of doing, but not really meeting with God. The definition of a hard heart is 'over exposure and under response to the truth.'



Ministry to Men

... Connecting Men In Ministry

www.ministrytomen.net

Stories That Impacted My Life

Ephesians 1:3

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.'

As a young Christian, my sales territory took me past the Baptist Book store in mid-town St. Louis. I just couldn't get enough to read. Two of the small books I read that had a great impact on my life, were Brother Lawrence's *'Practice the Presence of God'* and a book titled *'Acres of Diamonds.'*

In Brother Lawrence's book, he told of how he so desperately wanted to serve God. He became a monk and was sent to a monastery, where he was given a job in the kitchen washing dishes. He struggled with God over being put in this role; he wanted a more important role so he could reach people for Christ. God's Spirit taught him to practice God's presence in all he did, especially when he was washing dishes. As he began to learn how to do whatever he did for the glory of God, he began to see his life moving closer to God, and therefore touching lives all over the monastery for Christ. His simple message to me was 'Charlie practice the presence of God.'

The second story *'Acres of Diamonds'* was a book with several stories all of which had the same outcome. The one that impacted me the most was a story about Ali Hafid. It said he was rich and he was content. He was rich because he was content, and he was content because he was rich. One day a Muslim Priest stopped by his house and had dinner with him. As they relaxed together by the fireplace, the old priest began to tell him stories about diamonds; how much they were worth and what Ali Hafid could do if he owned a large diamond, or even better, a mine of diamonds.

Ali Hafid went to bed that night poor and discontent. He hadn't lost anything, but he was discontent because he felt he was poor, and he was poor because he was discontent.

In the next few days he sold as much as he could of what he owned, got some neighbors to look after his family and set out to find a mine of diamonds. He searched for about a year and a half, until in total despair; he walked into the ocean and drowned.

A few months later, the old priest came to Ali Hafid's old home and had dinner with the new owner. Later, as they sat by the fireplace telling stories, the priest got up and walked to the mantel and asked if Ali Hafid had returned. He was told of his death and asked why he thought he had come back. The priest reached up on the mantel and asked where then did this diamond come from? The man said that shortly after he purchased the land he found it in the stream behind the house, and it reflected the sun so he put it on the mantel.

It turned out to be the second largest diamond mine in the world. Ali Hafid owned it, but he died looking for it.

Romans 5:8

'But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners; Christ died for us.'

For many years I thought I knew what sin was. I was raised in a religious environment and had heard much taught and preached about sin, although that didn't do much to keep me from sinning. However, it was a great resource to me when I began to see that God knew that I was a sinner, but He had died for me anyway, and He wanted me to be part of His family. Rom. 5:8.

Even though I fought Him for a while, I couldn't resist His love and His forgiveness, and I opened my heart to him. Like most new Christians, I began to work on not sinning anymore. I thought I was doing a fair job in most areas when all of a sudden I read three very frightening verses. They were frightening because they gave me a whole new definition of sin. They didn't even mention the Ten Commandments or smoking or drinking or any of those religious sins.

- The last verse of Romans 14 says, 'Whatever is not of faith is sin.'
- James 4: 17 says, 'Therefore to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.'
- James 2:10 says 'For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.'

What I believe God wants to teach me in these verses is that I must quit seeing sin in degrees, and realize that all sin is an abomination to Him. I John 1:8-10 tells me to speak the truth about sin and it's role in my life, but to be strong in the truth of God that He knows me, He loves me, and He has made provision for my life – sin and all. He did this by sending Jesus Christ to come to earth, satisfy God's

requirements by living a sinless life, dying on the cross and then raising from the dead. When I opened my heart to Him, He exchanged it for His, and gave me the Holy Spirit as a seal of His total provision for me. I'm learning to trust Him enough to believe that He is able to do what He says He will do. Eph. 2: 4-5 says, 'But God being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved me even when I was dead in my transgressions made me alive together with Christ (by Grace I have been saved).'



Your ‘Stuff’ Isn’t Going With You.

Matt. 6:19-21

‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.’

A friend of mine and his wife went on a two week trip. While they were gone their home was vandalized. The thieves must have known they wouldn’t be back soon, because it appeared that they were there for a long time. When he and his wife came home, they found that the thieves had stolen everything they could put their hands on, and tried to destroy everything else. We received a letter from them telling how violated they felt as they saw the damage to their home.

A short time later, we received another letter expressing how difficult it has been as they went through all that had been stolen or destroyed and inventoried them for their insurance company.

It wasn’t very long until we received another letter expressing the difficulty they were experiencing seeing so many irreplaceable things lost or destroyed. But they said they had made a great discovery as they listed their belongings for the insurance company. ‘Nothing they were taking to heaven was lost or stolen.’

What great words of encouragement these were. About a year later, God used them in our life as we came home from a trip and found that our home had been robbed and many items stolen. The first thought I had was that nothing we are taking to heaven was lost or stolen.

Thanks, Lord.

Five Stages of Love
Ephesians 5:33

'Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.'

A young school teacher, in one of our home bible studies, was telling me about her boyfriend and how much she loved him and how they were looking forward to their wedding. I asked her if I could point out a couple of things she may not appreciate, and mostly because of her love and confidence in me, she said, 'Go ahead.'

The first thing I told her was a real challenge in most marriages, was that the couple usually spent more time, treasure and planning on their wedding than they did on their marriage. She gave me a strange look, and spent a few minutes defending their plans.

Next, I told her that more than likely, right now what she was experiencing with her husband 'to be' was not love but infatuation, and more likely than not sometime in the near future she (and he) would be disillusioned because their expectations were not being met. This would bring on misery, and for too many marriages I told her that's where they end. But if you trust God and not let misery drive you there, you will begin to experience acceptance which will lead you to love.

The five stages are:

1. Infatuation
2. Disillusionment
3. Misery
4. Acceptance
5. Love

She really let me know how much she loved her future husband and how this would never happen to them.

Several years later, I received a letter from her on how they had gone through all these stages, and how much they were now experiencing and enjoying real love.



Letter 38

More One Liners Ephesians 1:18

'I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.'

Going to the water was not enough - They had to step in.
Joshua 3

Would you be willing to get involved in something that was guaranteed to fail unless God intervened?

Watching the bush burn was not enough - He had to take a step toward it before God spoke to him. Exodus 3:4

Naaman goes from being a leper who thought he knew what God should and would do to heal him, to agreeing to do it God's way even though it made no sense to him. And then saying, 'Now I know there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.' II Kings 5

Moses sent 12 spies to spy out the land of Canaan. When they came back they all reported seeing the same things. But ten of them saw through their earthly eyes and said, 'We cannot go there, they are too strong for us.' Two of them, Caleb and Joshua, looked through God's eyes and said 'We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome them.' Numbers 13:30

When Jesus performed His first public miracle and turned the water into wine, His mother, Mary made a very powerful statement when asked what to do she said, 'Whatever He says to you, do it.' John 2:5

When Jesus appeared to the two disciples on the Emmaus Road, He made a very powerful statement to them, 'O foolish men and slow of heart not to believe all that the prophets have spoken.' Luke 24:25.

Do we believe it all, or do we pick and choose?

Before Moses killed the Egyptian the Bible says, ‘So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.’ Ex. 2:12. Moses looked every way but up.

Where do you look before you act?

When Elisha’s servant went outside, he saw that they were surrounded by an army. He ran to his master and said, ‘Alas, my master, what should we do?’ Elisha answered with a prayer, not for help but for faith. He prayed, ‘O Lord, I pray, open his eyes so that he may see’ and his servant saw that God’s army surrounded the enemy. II Kings 6:15 -17.

***When you are under pressure, do you pray for help,
or for eyes to see?***

I Thessalonians 5:2

‘For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.’

I remember hearing a song one time titled ‘Long Distance Eyes’ As I thought about it, these thoughts came to my mind. Long distance eyes look back to learn from the past, but not to live there. Long distance eyes look at today because that’s where God has me right now. Long distance eyes look to the future, only to see their reward in eternity with God. The future between now and then is in God’s hands. He says, ‘So do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will care for itself, every day has enough trouble of its own.’ Matthew 6:34; James 4:13, 14

When Abraham needed to go to war the Bible tells us, ‘He led out his trained men born in his house, 318 men.’ Genesis 14:14. Whenever I see these verses, I see what God is doing in the ministry He’s called us to. When we need soldiers to follow God’s directions in what He has us doing, we look to the men He has brought into our family of men who are there for one another. God has so richly blessed us.

Who do you take with you when you have to go to war?

‘Halftime’ is a book that does such a great job of showing us the difference of pursuing success instead of significance. If I’m looking for success alone I’ve probably left God out of what I’m doing. If I give myself to Him and pursue Him, not results, then He blesses me with contentment. The results are always God’s, not mine. Colossians 1:28, 29.

Back in 1983, I was encouraged to go on staff with CBMC. I began learning a lesson that has encouraged and blessed me as well as many other godly people who financially

support us in the ministry. I began to see that the dollars they sent made the ministry possible, but the prayers they prayed for us made the ministry profitable.

There's a small verse in the Bible that God used to turn my life from life to death and then to real life. It was James 2:19. In my Bible it says, 'Charlie, you believe that God is one, you do well, and the demons also believe and shudder.'

You see, every time someone mentioned God or the Bible to me my defense or my answer was always, 'I believe.' When the truth of this verse set in, I realized I may have known about God, but I didn't know Him. Then John 1:12 brought it all together; 'To as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.'

Do you believe? Have you received?

When Is the Best Time to Plant a Tree?

Isaiah 61:3b

‘So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.’

At a men’s conference in downtown St. Louis, the speaker asked us a question, ‘When is the best time to plant a tree?’ He left us hanging for a minute (it seemed like much longer) and said, ‘Twenty years ago.’ If you had planted a tree twenty years ago, you could be eating the fruit, or sitting under its shade or many other wonderful things. Then he asked another question, ‘When is the next best time to plant a tree?’ Without much hesitation he said, ‘Today!’ He then went on to challenge us to pray about the trees we hadn’t planted in our lives that we should have, and to go ahead and plant them and trust God.

Do you have any trees to plant?

A quick reminder: in a book ‘*The Servant*’; one particular sentence stuck with me. “Good intentions minus action equals squat.”

Do you have any trees to plant?

How many times have you been encouraged to walk by faith? It’s a great aspect of our walk with Christ if properly applied. II Cor. 5:7 tells us to ‘walk by faith not by sight’, however, so many Christians are working as hard as they can on strengthening their faith because they don’t realize that it is the object of our faith (Christ), not our faith, is what we are to focus on and totally rest in.

***Is ‘your’ faith strong,
or is your faith in Christ strong?***

Are You Exulting?

Romans 5: 1-5

‘Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.’

After a hot racquetball game with my sons, I was cleaning up and noticed a lump on my neck. I didn’t pay much attention to it thinking it was from one of the hits I took that night. At my annual physical check up two weeks later I mentioned it to my doctor because it had not gone away. He checked it out and sent me to get some further test that proved I had a non- Hodgkin Lymphoma. He sent me to an oncologist, where I was scheduled for six weeks of chemotherapy and six weeks of radiation treatment.

For the first few weeks I wasn’t sure if what I had was curable or not, but I didn’t sense I was struggling with life or death. There were a lot of people praying for me and my family, and I felt comfortable in my walk with God. As I read my Bible one day, I came to Romans 5 and as I read it I came to verse 2 & 3 and the word ‘exult’. What it said was, ‘Therefore, having been justified by faith, I have peace with God through my Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also I have obtained my introduction by faith into this grace in which I stand; and I exult in my tribulations knowing that tribulations bring about perseverance and perseverance, proven character, and proven character hope, and hope does not disappoint because the love of God has

been poured out within my heart through the Holy Spirit who was given to me.'

Verse 1 was one of my favorite verses, because the lack of real peace is what drew me to Christ, not the fear of hell or the hope of heaven, but the lack of real peace. When I came to verses 2 & 3 I couldn't get past exult. I told God I was doing all right, I felt I was trusting Him and waiting on Him. But that word exult kept coming up. I believe I was in my life long practice of denial; with myself and with God. God convinced me that all was not well in the world, but all was well with us, my hope was in Him and I could rejoice and exult in my life.

Well, as you know, I lived through it. In fact, shortly after my third treatment, my doctor told me it looked like the cancer was gone and other tests proved it was. I began learning many lessons during this time, but none as important as exulting in my tribulations.

Are you exulting?

Two Very Difficult Times in Jesus' Life

John 11:35, 38

'Jesus wept.' vs 35

'So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave and a stone was lying against it.'

vs 38

Mark 14: 33 – 36, 39

'And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. And He said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch.' And He went a little beyond them and fell to the ground and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. And He was saying, 'Abba! Father! All things are possible for you; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will.' Vs.33-36

'Again He went away and prayed, saying the same words.'

vs. 39

We see a beautiful picture of the love Jesus had for His friend Lazarus (the same love He has for you and me). In John 11:35 we see that Jesus wept. He knows He will soon be bringing him back to life. Why would he cry? In verse 38 it says Jesus was deeply moved within. What can those verses be telling us? Could it be that Jesus was feeling sad for Lazarus because He knew he was in heaven with His Father and Jesus was bringing him back to this world?

Another picture we see of Jesus is His strong feelings about His relationship with His Father. In Mark 14:33 the bible says Jesus is very distressed and troubled. Then in verse 34 He tells His disciples, 'My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death.' Then in verses 35-36 and 39, He prayed the same prayer three times. 'Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me, yet not what I will but what You will.' Jesus had no fear of death; He had

no fear of the pain He would endure. His concern, I believe, is that for the first time ever His relationship with His Father would be broken, because of my sin being placed on Him. Even though through my earthly eyes it was only a short time, it was like forever for Christ, but there was no other way. His love for you and me is beyond our understanding.



*Seek God with all your heart
and you will find Him.
Jeremiah 29: 11-13*

Joshua 1:8

‘This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.’

A wise man told me one time that the author who benefits you most is not the one who tells you something you didn’t know before, but the one who gives expression to the truth that has been dumbly struggling in you for utterance.
Oswald Chambers

What have you read lately?

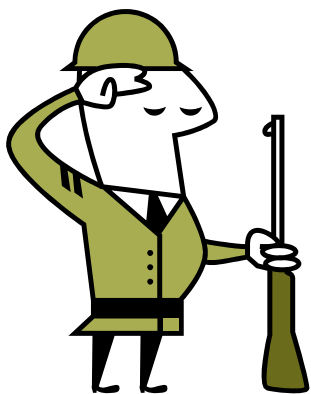
Charlie Tremendous Jones loved books and he loved people, but most of all he loved God. One of his favorite sayings was, ‘You will be the same twenty years from now except for the books you read and the people you meet.’

Meet anyone this week? Read a book this month?

The book of Daniel in the bible tells of many great attributes in Daniel. Two that recently jumped out to me are found in Daniel 2: 17-18, where Daniel is faced with a situation that only God can solve. He asked the King for time before he answered, and went to his three friends to ask God to intervene for him.

The second attribute is found in Chapter 6 which says, ‘The commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him.’

How would we respond if we were required to give an answer? Would we turn to God first? Do we have brothers in Christ who will guard our back and lift us up in prayer?



Do you have someone who
Guards your back? Holds
you accountable?



Someone who prays
for you?

*What if a search was done in our life, would
they find no items in our life to condemn us with?*

Numbers 8:23-26

‘Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying ‘This is what applies to the Levites; from twenty-five years old and upward they shall enter to perform service in the work of the tent of meeting. But at the age of fifty years, they shall retire from service in the work and not work any more.

They may, however, assist their brothers in the tent of meeting, to keep an obligation, but they themselves shall do no work. Thus you shall deal with the Levites concerning their obligations.’

Most preaching and teaching I’ve heard since I came to Christ tells us that the bible doesn’t talk about retirement. However, in the book of Numbers the Levites, who were the priest, (which is what the Christians are today) were told to start their service at 30 years and to do so until 50. (Num. 4: 3, 23, 30, 35) Then in 8: 23-26 He tells them from 25 to 50. I believe the years from 25 – 30 are preparation years for the young priest. Then from 30 – 50 to serve as a Levite and at the age of 50 to retire from the front line service to become the mentors of the young men coming along. What a beautiful picture of the process of discipleship; learning, sharing, teaching from one generation to the next.

Do you have a Barnabas – Paul & Timothy?

Another great Old Testament story is the last plague on Egypt to get God’s people free. It is celebrated as ‘The Passover’ today. If you read Exodus 12:22, you were to take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood to the lintel and the two doorposts. The basin is located right in front of the door, the lintel is the top of the door frame, and the two doorposts are on each side of the door frame. This sacrificial blood on the door is a picture of us finding safety as we stand behind the blood of Christ on the cross.



Do you see what I see?

Did you notice that those behind the door had no instructions on what they were doing, just be behind the blood.

Did you notice that those inside the door frame could not see the blood – it was there for God to see so He could pass over. That's where the name came from.

*We don't live by faith in our faith,
but in Christ.*

Facts versus Feelings

Ephesians 4:15

‘But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ.’

Have you ever been caught up in a discussion (argument) with someone about any kind of situation? It could be about how to discipline our children, how to drive the car (or park it), and what the Bible says or maybe even about politics, how about ‘Do you love me?’ There could be many more, but I think you have the idea.

One great help to me in my process of learning, were two things I was encouraged to think about before I allowed myself to get too involved in an argument.

1. If I start out in an argument by sharing some or all of what I see as wrong in their point of view, all I’m doing is causing them to defend what they believe, even if they can’t justify why they believe it. Proverbs 15:1 has been a help here. ‘A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.’
2. It’s even more difficult to deal with if you are engaged in a discussion with a person, let’s say it’s your spouse, and you have all the facts on your side but their feelings tell them they are right and you are wrong. You will never win that war. You may think you have won, but winning a battle is not winning the war, and more often than not, it closes the door on more discussion.

The best cure I've found for this situation is to trust Christ and be willing to put your facts to the side; give up your right, even your right to be right; leaving the door open to further discussion. Job 6: 24-26

Listen to the pain, not the words.

Job 6: 24-26

Start your discussions with a soft comment.

Proverbs 15:1

One on One Discipleship

Philippians 1:1

‘Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons.’

Colossians 1:1

‘Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother’

One of the great benefits to ‘one on one’ discipleship is that when you get a person to articulate what they are learning, it is the first step of obedience.

While meeting with a young man for a number of weeks in the discipleship study called Operation Timothy, we came to a question from John 10:30 where Jesus says, ‘The Father and I are one.’ The question was simple, what is Jesus claiming? Well, the young man did not believe Jesus was God and he let me know that. After me taking him to many other verses, and showing him that they all pointed to Jesus being God we concluded our lesson. That was the last time I saw him.

Back then, those kinds of things didn’t bother me much; I just found another man and we started into Operation Timothy. As only God can set things up, after a few good weeks together with a new man, we came to the question from John 10:30. His response to the question was loud and fast – ‘I don’t believe that’. I asked him what it was that he didn’t believe, and he said ‘That Jesus was God.’ I asked him to read the verse and tell me what Jesus was saying. He read it and again said, ‘He’s claiming to be God but I don’t believe it.’ I said that’s ok, let’s go to the next question.

We met the next week, and then the following week he floated into my office. ‘Charlie, guess what I learned this

week.' I asked, 'What?' He replied, 'Jesus is God and he went on for five minutes, never once even mentioning our study two weeks ago.'

Once again, God showed me He didn't need me to prove to anyone that I knew more scripture than they did. All I had to do is pray, show up, and trust God.

For quite a while I was under the impression that I came to Christ because I pursued Him and He accepted me. But it didn't take God long to let me know that I had never really pursued Him. I have gotten better at responding to His pursuit, but it's always been His love for me that brought me into His family.

My favorite way to end my prayers is to tell God I love Him, and I want to be faithful to Him; but, how thankful I am that this is not the basis of my salvation. It is His faithfulness to me, and His love for me that makes the relationship real.

II Corinthians 5:7

'For we walk by faith, not by sight'

One of the great joys in my life has been the opportunity to follow up on men whose eyes have been opened, at least to some degree. They have been prayed for, invited to a place where they hear from a peer how someone else has experienced life change, and they want to know more. The bulk of this follow up was done after we had an event where we asked for a response from those in attendance, and two by two we would go meet with them on their turf.

It was through follow up that God began to teach me the difference between 'goals and desires'. For a long time I thought they were the same, but I began to learn that both were important in my life, but very different. A goal in my life is something that depends solely on me; what I do; how I do it, when I do it, etc. (Always knowing that apart from God I can do nothing). Desires require the same things from me, but also require something from others.

An example would be my marriage. If my goal is to have the best marriage in the world that would require Tammy to do her part for it to happen (based on my expectations or my goal). This would be a great desire but a terrible goal, because when someone blocks my goal I tend to get angry.

Now back to the follow up as an example of 'goal vs. desire'. In the early days of office follow up, my goal was for the man I was calling on (cold call by the way) would be in when we called; he would agree to meet with us; he would be open and receptive to the message and come to Christ. Now this is a great desire, but God showed me that all those things depended on Him, not me. So, slowly but surely, these things became my desire. My goals were that my heart would be open to God and to the man I was meeting with; that I would be willing to set up time to go,

and that I would trust God for all the results, knowing that I was not God's only resource in this man's life.

What freedom this brings.



Romans 5:1-5

‘Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.’

In letter 41, I shared with you about how God used the non-Hodgkin Lymphoma cancer in my body to help me begin to see that my walk with Him was much more than giving lip service to walking with Him, but to really walk with Him and trust Him, that He knows best, not me, and that I should exult in Him, and in His love for me. Several years after this great time in my life, God took me back to the book of Habakkuk, a book He had used to open my eyes on many lessons, as a very young Christian.

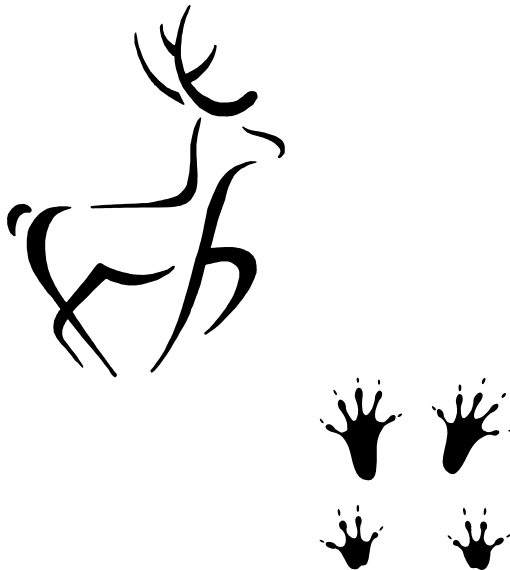
The short story of what it says is that Habakkuk, a godly man, saw the sins of God’s people and he prayed that God would straighten them out. God agreed with him, but he didn’t like the way God was going to do it (ever been there??). After much discussion, Habakkuk finally comes to the point of fully trusting God, and he makes one of the most powerful statements of faith in God in the entire scripture. In Chapter 3: 16-19 he says, 16 “I heard and my inward parts trembled, at the sound my lips quivered. Decay entered my bones and in my place I tremble. Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress for the people to arise who will invade us. 17 Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, thought the yield of the olive should fail and the fields

produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, 18 yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. 19 The Lord God is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet and makes me walk on my high places.”

Look at verse 16. He was an emotional basket case, but never the less, he trusted God. In vs. 17 he saw his world crashing down around him. In 18 we see God teaching him (and me) again to exult in Him and finally, in 19 to come to see where his strength comes from, and to realize God has already given him all he needs to be all God wants him to be.

Are you exulting yet?

We will discuss hinds' feet in another letter.



Hinds' Feet
Habakkuk 3:19

'The Lord God is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet and makes me walk on my high places.'

Psalms 18:33

'He makes my feet like hinds' feet and sets me upon my high places.'

As I began to write these letters, it astonished me how many of them were started in my life in the first few years of knowing Christ. He has taken those early teaching points and allowed me to share them, so that I could have a better understanding of what He's teaching me. (Philemon vs. 6)

Habakkuk's statement in 3:19 that the Lord is his strength is where we all need to start. Then, in the rest of the verse he doesn't speak about what God will do, but about what He has already done. 'And He has made my feet like hinds' feet and makes me to walk on my high places.'

A hind can be an animal of many different species that God has given a special gift. They live in high, precarious areas where getting a good foothold is essential to their existence. Having hind's feet allows them to find solid ground with their front feet and their back feet go precisely to that spot.

God tells Habakkuk that He has given him hind's feet. (And I believe he has given them to us). He is our hinds' feet, and because He lives in us, we can walk in His steps so that the last half of the verse can be ours. 'And make me walk on my high places.'

Am I walking in His steps, or am I only trusting Him when all else has failed?

The Lord God is my strength.

Speaking the Truth in Love

Ephesians 4:15

‘but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ.’

I have a friend, Fred, who had a saying that I heard him share many times, sometimes to me. ‘What you want to say is good and needs to be said, but before you do it, put some cotton around it.’

How many times have we ruptured a relation by speaking before we think, or sometimes before we earn the right to say it? The bible says in Ephesians 4:15, ‘Speaking the truth in love.’

We need to always follow this admonition, but not at the expense of the hearer. The timing of speaking the truth can often be more important than the words themselves. The love of Christ they experience is far more important than the words we use.

It is only when others see Christ in us that they will desire what we have. That’s the way God has established it. He sent Christ into the world to reconcile it to Himself, then Christ gave us the ministry of reconciliation. II Corinthians 5: 18, 19. Then He tells us in Matt. 5: 16, for us to ‘let our light (Christ) shine before men in such a way that they may see (Christ) your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.’ (I added the bracketed words).

II Corinthians 5:7

'For we walk by faith, not by sight'

Have you ever had someone ask or challenge you – ‘How can you worship a God you cannot see?’ That sounds like such an unanswerable question. But let’s think about it, or better yet, let’s look at it. Is there anything, anywhere in the universe, you can look at and not see God? How can anyone look at the creation and not see the hand of God. Well, it is really easy; the Bible often speaks of men with eyes who cannot see. They will not see God in creation or any other way. II Corinthians 5:7 tells us we walk by faith not by sight. No man will see God until we are with Him. He came to us in the form of a man, Jesus, who told His disciple Thomas, who doubted but came back, ‘Because you have seen Me you have believed. Blessed are they who do not see and yet believe.’

As I’ve been learning to ‘Practice the Presence of God’ it has caused me to see Him in everything I do and everywhere I go. He has taken up residence in me and I see Him in everything.

Is your life focused on physically seeing God, or to know Him and see Him in your life?

What Do You Really Want?

John 20:31

'But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.'

How many times in your life have you decided you wanted to do something or quit doing something? Exercise, diet, smoking, there are way too many to list.

I usually get a very strong rebuttal from people when I tell them that what they want to change in their life is very easy to do. After much criticism for my comment, I give them proof of my statement by telling them I found doing what you want to do to be very easy. In fact, I have done it many, many times. The real problem is, not wanting to stop, it's coming to the place in your life where you really want to want to quit.

As a young boy I developed the habit of smoking. By the time I was in my early twenties I had smoked for about ten years. During that time I had quit more times than I could count.

Shortly after my marriage (to another smoker), we purchased some life insurance for me. After all the papers were signed and the tests were taken I received a call from our insurance agent. He told me it was about to be finalized, but there was a problem with the x-ray machine and they would need to take new tests. I thought I was in great shape physically, but the first test looked like a 60 year old man with emphysema.

After the second x-rays were taken, with the same results, I was rejected for insurance. As I looked at the x-rays I saw what appeared to be a cloud in a thunderstorm in my chest. I was told that my smoking habit had caused this. That day

I quit smoking, and within thirty days the cloud was gone and I had my insurance.

What happened? I had gone from wanting to quit, to wanting to want to quit.

The step from wanting, to wanting to want, is a difficult step to take; it can often feel impossible. I was not a Christian when this happened, but since coming to know and trust in Christ, I'm beginning to learn that when I'm faced with anything in my life that I desire to do, my first step needs to be to acknowledge my inability to do it, and to trust Christ to do it in and through my life.

In John 5:19 Jesus says, 'The Son can do nothing of Himself.' Then in John 15: 5, He says 'Apart from me you can do nothing.' Then in John 5:30 He says, 'I can do nothing on my own initiative.'

Jesus is telling us that, as a man He could do nothing apart from the Father, and that I (we) can do nothing apart from Him.

Do I believe this? Am I willing to trust Him in my daily walk and with all my life?
Will I trust Him?

I Corinthians 13:11-13

‘When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully know. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.’

One of the more difficult processes in our Christian walk is to discern between God’s direction for us through the Holy Spirit, and Satan’s lies about what was said or not said.

When we first come to Christ, we receive the Holy Spirit and the sanctification process begins in our life. As a new Christian, God usually gives us many physical and emotional experiences to build into us as we walk with Him. So His guidance in our life is very obvious. As we grow in our walk these experiences tend to be less and less.

Satan comes to us and says we have been fooling ourselves; there is no God or, if there is, He surely isn’t interested in you; you will never measure up.

The Holy Spirit speaks to us and says to trust God, walk by faith, the just shall live by faith, and whatever is not of faith is sin. As a Christian matures, God allows him to walk more and more by faith (which is trusting God) and less and less walking by sight (which is ourselves).

What I’m learning for my life is, when I’m unsure in any area of my walk with Christ, is to ask Him for wisdom, (James 1:5) and to boldly take a step of faith.

Matthew 28:19, 20

‘Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always..

Hebrews 4: 12

“The Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow. It is the discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Why should I believe something just because it’s in the Bible? Jesus said in John 5:39, 40, “You search the scriptures because you think in them you have eternal life and these are they that bear witness of Me and you will not come to Me that you will have life”.

I think as I look at those two verses I can answer the question I posed earlier, “Why should I believe a thing because it’s in the Bible?” As a Christian, I need to believe what the Bible says because God’s Holy Spirit teaches me that it is true. If I’m not a Christian, trying to set my life on doing the right thing, even if it is a scripturally right thing, apart from Christ is total failure.

The Pharisees had a marvelous way of living by the authority of what the Bible had to say, without having the eternal authority of God’s Spirit to direct them. A person apart from the Spirit of God learns, literally, what the Bible says but that will not produce the written epistles that God talks about. There must be the life of Christ in a man, that enables the interpretation of the word by the Holy Spirit, before we can begin to live lives that back up what we preach, and we become written epistles known and read by all men. Only when I receive the Holy Spirit and am lifted to God by the Holy Spirit, do the words of God become quick and powerful. The only way the words of God can

be understood by me is by contact with the Word of God. The connection between the Lord Himself, who is the Word and His spoken words are inseparable. You can't have one without having both. Jesus said the words that He speaks to us are spirit and they are life. The Bible doesn't reveal everything. There are some situations we are going to run into in life that are not explicitly shared in the Bible. But the knowledge of the truth of the Lord Himself is only possible through the inception of the Holy Spirit. God says in His Word that when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth. The Holy Spirit alone makes the Word of God understandable. The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, of regenerating and sanctifying us, is to incorporate us into Christ until we become living witnesses. A quote from S.D. Gordon says it very well when he says, 'We have the Bible bound in beautiful leather, what we need is the Bible bound in shoe leather,' and that is exactly the teaching of our Lord Jesus, that after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit they would become witnesses to Jesus. They began to speak more eloquently with their lips, and people took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. When the scriptures are made quick and powerful in our lives by the Holy Spirit, they fit every need of life. The only interpreter of the scriptures is the Holy Spirit, and when we have received the Holy Spirit, we learn the first golden rule of spiritual life – that God reveals His will to me according to the state of my character.

Ephesians 5:33

‘Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.’

A major turning point in my life was a young lady, my wife Tammy, who respected me and saw something in me that I never knew was there. I sensed for the first time, perhaps in my whole life, true love. The joy, the romance, the spontaneity brought on by the grace of a faithful wife who would love me no matter what; who was committed to me in faithfulness for all her life. That love, respect and commitment motivated me to love her in return more freely than ever. I no longer loved her out of a fear that I might lose her, but I began to learn to love her out of a sheer joy of loving her. This was how I believe God opened my heart for Him to come in, as I had learned in a small way that in a great way, God loved me just as I was and His arms were extended out to me to come home and sup with Him.



Excerpts from Major Ian Thomas'

'The Saving Life of Christ'

Joshua 1: 10, 11

'Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, 'pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you are to cross this Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess it.'

How could Joshua accomplish in three days what the great warrior Moses could not do in 40 years?

Moses was the man who tried; he gave the people the law without the Promised Land.

Joshua was the man who trusted, he gave them the Promised Land in which to practice the law.

And on the third day, early in the morning they went in.

When the spies went in to check out the land, they discovered that the army of Canaan had been a defeated foe for 40 years; when they had heard how God had dried up the water of the Red Sea.

We must remember this as children of God. He does not give me strength, He is my strength. He does not give me victory, He is my victory. He cannot be my life without being all I need, for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete in Him.

When Joshua asked the man with the sword (Joshua 5:13), "Are you for us or for our adversaries?" The man (who I believe is Jesus Christ) said, 'I am neither on your side nor on their side, I have come as Captain of the Host of the

Lord. I have not come to take sides; I've come to take over.'

**Have I come to the place in my life that I trust God
enough to let Him take over?**



What Are My Idols?

Exodus 20: 3-5 (the 2nd commandment)

'You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them, for I the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and fourth generations of those who hate me.'

Idolatry may seem like a sin that modern people need not fear. But idolatry is not just bowing down to idols. It is trusting in what one has made, and therefore we see ourselves as having the power to create and sustain.

If I say I worship God, but put my trust in my bank account, my home, my business, my organization, the people I know; then I am an idolater. Do I trust God more than what my hands have made?

Do I trust God? Do I love Him with all my heart, all my mind, all my soul, and all my strength? Or is He just a safety net when I get myself in trouble. Is it all about Him?

What does faith in God look like in my life? What about trust in God, is that different than faith?

Would I be willing like the little grey haired man on George Street, Mr. Genioia to have faith and trust in God to do what I believe He wants to do in my life, even if I never see any results from my perspective?

These are hard questions, easy to say yes to, but very difficult to follow. God must do it, and He tells me His ways are different from my ways. Am I really willing to trust Him to do and to accomplish all He wants from my

life or will I base it on what I do and what I accomplish – what I see?

When God tells me in James that, if I lack wisdom (faith-trust) all I need to do is let go of my agenda and ask Him for it, and He will give it to me. But now I must walk by faith-trust, even if nothing seems to change; even if I don't see what I expected to see. It is no longer me, but Christ in me.

Would I see Ministry to Men being God's call on my life if I couldn't see life change in men's lives? Would I be content in my marriage if it doesn't meet my standards? How about my job, or my family, or anything that I believe are my possessions? Am I at the place in my life that I see that it's not mine – it all belongs to God and He has graciously allowed me to trust Him with the results. Proverbs 3:5-6 comes alive. The problems I have are not really with God and His ways, but with my limited understanding of Him.

Proverbs 3: 5-6, 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.'

Letter 58

Conformed to the Image of Christ

Luke 6:40

*‘A pupil is not above his teacher, but everyone after
He is fully trained will be like his teacher.’*

As a young Christian, I was taught and I believed that I was to be the teacher as I met with men in discipleship.

I had an agenda that I was taught, I had the correct verses we should use, books to read, meetings to go to, and how we should be faithful to our agenda. As I read Luke 6:40, I was looking to clone others as I had been cloned.

Most, if not all, I was taught and that I was teaching was right on. But that is true about the Pharisees; they had all the head knowledge, but no heart knowledge. They knew about God, but they didn't know Him.

I always insisted that the man I met with was faithful. God showed me that I should trust God to walk through my life, so that I would be faithful, and He would see to the faithfulness of His disciple.

The end result is that we are both becoming more and more like Christ who is our teacher.

Romans 8:29 – Conformed to the image of Christ.

Who Is Your Man?
Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

‘Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor; for if either of them falls the one will lift up his companion; but woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.’

God has taught me, throughout my walk with Him, the joy of being a Timothy, walking with another man and seeing him live out his walk with God; beginning to learn as he learns, following him as he follows Christ, knowing that we are there for one another. Having someone in my life that I can share what God is teaching me about trusting Him, and practicing His presence in my life more and more.

While never ceasing to be a Timothy, God brings a man into my life and puts me in the role of Paul. To open my heart to Christ as He uses what He is teaching me to teach another man that it’s not so much what we do, but it’s all about who we trust. As I walk with God and with this man, God continues to teach me to follow Him and trust Him to teach us both. It’s not about learning what to do so much as it is about learning who we are ‘In Christ Jesus’.

Then somewhere along the process, we begin to realize that God has brought men into our life to teach us and we call that Timothy. It never ends, because as we walk with Him He brings others into our lives and we call that being a Paul, which never ends. Then, whether we know it or not, Christ in us, uses us as a Barnabas (an encourager) in the life or lives of other men. This never ends either.

Colossians 1: 28-29 says it all very well. ‘We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.’

Letter 60

Notes for Men

Isaiah 6:8

'Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying 'Whom shall I send and who will go for Us?'

Then I said 'Here am I, send me!'

Matthew 9: 37, 38 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few, therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

I believe in these verses Christ is sharing a vision of discipleship with his disciples. You don't become a worker until you know the job description. But knowing the job, or the job description, is not the only answer. A man must come to a place in his walk with God that he shares with other men out of the fullness of his own heart and his own spirit. Not just from theory, but from the overflow of his heart.

In Luke 1: 17 and following, we see God raising up John the Baptist to make the way straight that the Lord Jesus could come. I believe God wants to use you and me to be John the Baptist in the lives of other men, to prepare the way for God to bring them into His kingdom and His fellowship.

Luke 6:40 tells us that a pupil is not above his teacher, but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher. I believe true discipleship is when we begin to see the multiplication process happen, that one pupil becomes like his teacher, and his pupil becomes like his teacher, and on and on. But we must realize that it is the Spirit of Christ in us that is the teacher, so we teach Christ, not programs.

So what is discipleship? What does a worker look like? I believe a major evidence of a man being a disciple of Jesus Christ or a worker is that, to him, discipleship is not an event he takes part in, but it becomes his life. To have Matthew 8: 28 say to him, ‘as you go – share.’ We typically teach the things we know about, but we always reproduce what or who we are.

We can teach facts, but we really need to be casting a vision, more than just teaching. That vision is portrayed in II Timothy 2:2, where Paul tells young Timothy that he wants to teach him, in order that he might teach other faithful men, who might teach other men. Or in Colossians 1:28, 29, where Paul says his greatest desire is to present every man complete, and he will strive with the energy of the Holy Spirit in the life of a man to do that.

Being involved in ministry with God is about building relationships, not building a program. These relationships need to start with our relationship with God. And then if we are married – to our wife, our children, our family and let God fill in the blank as He brings them into our life. This will cause us to come to the point of starting small when we talk about discipleship, and moving at their pace not our agenda. As men begin to have their lives changed, this change begins to be passed on to other men and we will see the ministry begin to grow. But if we select the general way to start a men’s ministry, where they see numbers of men getting involved in our events but not establishing relationships, we will remain an inch deep and a mile wide.

Restoring Fellowship

Have you noticed that God has arranged it that He puts the restoring of fellowship in our lap?

Matt. 5:23-24; Mark 11:25

In Matt. 5:23-24 God says: ‘Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, (Note - against you) leave your offering there before the altar and go, first be restored to your brother and then come and make your offering.’

And then Mark 11:25 says, ‘Whenever you stand praying, forgive (Note - you have it against them) if you have anything against anyone.’

So, it doesn’t matter if we have offended or if we have been offended, it is our responsibility to take the initiative to restore the relationship.

Reading the Bible As If It Were a Letter from God to Me

As a young Christian, I was encouraged by quite a few people to read the Bible and to read it as though it was a personal letter to me from God the Father.

It wasn't long before I began to change 'we' and 'us' to 'I' and 'me'. This made God's Word take a whole new perspective. I began to sense what God meant when He said He desired a personal, intimate relationship with me. Before too long, I was placing my name in many of the verses I read. Such as, 'For God so loved the world' to 'For God so loved 'Charlie'.

What a joy it has been for years, almost every day, seeing my name mentioned as God expressed His love to me.

As I began to share this with others, I heard many comments on how reading the Bible this way had been such a blessing and gave greater insight to what the Lord wants us to learn from His Words.

A group of friends, in a Bible study I was leading, bought me a wonderful Bible Called 'Charlie Williams, New Testament with Psalms & Proverbs Personal Promise Bible. See <http://www.yourpersonalizedbible.com/> to order yours. This Bible changes every 'we and us' to Charlie/Tammy/St. Charles, etc.; it personalized my Bible from a generic letter, to a personal letter to and about me and my relationship with God.

Numbers 6:24 – 26. The Lord bless Charlie, and keep him. The Lord makes His face to shine on Charlie, and be gracious to Charlie, and give Charlie peace.

He has and He will.

Letter 63

Yes, Lord, I Believe. Help My Unbelief.

Proverbs 3:5, 6

‘Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.’

Do I really believe God is fully trustworthy?

This is a question God has put on my heart many times over the years.

It’s easy to say ‘yes’ and believe it, but does my life, my actions, my choices, give any evidence that it is God in control, or is He just my back up?

Do I look to Him only after I’ve tried all my own ways or do I start every action, ever choice, by going to Him and acknowledging my inability?

It’s about my willingness to trust Him, and to step out in faith, faith in Him, not in me. I don’t need greater faith to walk with Him, I need more trust in Him.

How do I begin to learn how to trust Him? Brother Lawrence gave me the secret years ago, ‘*Practice the Presence of God*’. As I begin to realize and practice that God abides in me at all times, and that God loves me unconditionally, I begin the learning process of trusting Him, for no other reason than His love for me and His wanting only good for me, no matter what I think about my circumstances.

Yes, Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief.

We conclude this book with a letter every man wishes he could receive and every woman wishes she could write.

Tammy designed a booklet for everyone who attended their Easter dinner. Here is the one she made for Charlie.



HE IS RISEN

*And because of that you
can be His child...*

*completely accepted
and forgiven!!!*

He loves you!!!

HAPPY
EASTER
2011

Easter is probably the most
important holiday we celebrate
because it points us to what God did to demonstrate
His great love for us.

Jesus death, burial and resurrection paid your debt for
sin. He wiped your slate clean and allows you to
become a joint heir with Him...a child of the King—that's
you. He gave you a new spirit, an alive spirit that can
have a relationship with the God of the universe.
Isn't that amazing!!!

This Easter gift is given with love and a deep desire for
you to more fully realize all you have
IN CHRIST.

This book of Ephesians along with the whole Bible is
for each of us personally. I'm in hopes that as you read
your name in the pages of these verses you realize more
and more how wonderfully you are made and how very
much God loves you.

Happy Easter

Love,
Tammy

Charlie,

Since you already have your personal Bible I thought I'd write you a letter instead.

God so loves Charlie and Tammy that He gave His only begotten Son to pay Charlie and Tammy's penalty for sin. Wow!!!

God is also the reason for what we have in our marriage. He has blessed us even when we didn't know Him or have a clue that He was active in our lives.

For years I've beat myself up for the things I allowed that I knew were wrong. But in reading your letters last week I have a whole new perspective on what went on during those young years of our lives.

I knew I gave myself to you but didn't realize that you had fallen head over heels in love with me; even though you probably didn't realize it at the time or at least not at first.

I am seeing more clearly that God was in all the things I thought were so wrong and bad. He had a plan for our lives and even with our choices He worked. He loved us all along. That's impossible to understand but I believe it.

As we have travelled this life together we have learned so many things about ourselves, each other and God. He has been so faithful to us and I thank Him that somehow we both were committed to our marriage even during times when we didn't even like each other too much.

You called me 'curly' when my hair was straight as a poker; then when I got a permanent a few years ago and I wasn't at all sure I liked it—you liked it and kept telling me so. Even years ago you really liked long hair but let me know that however I wanted to fix my hair was OK with you. It just took a little time to get used to the changes I would make.

You used to have quite a temper and I always took things you said personally. Not good for either of us. Anger and depression went hand in hand. But even with that we were learning again more about each other, ourselves and God.

We didn't see eye to eye on childrearing either but through God we became a balance and we did the very best we knew how to do. And from looking at the boys, their walk with the Lord, their love for their wives and children I think God used even us to help mold their lives. Mom used to tell me she wished I would have taken some of her good qualities, well I did and so have our boys—they got some of the not so good qualities and some of the good ones and then God has molded them into the

men He wants them to be apart from us using other people and circumstances.

We've spent many years working alongside each other first in CBMC and now Ministry to Men. Even putting the flag up was a learning experience, I think more for you than for me. Then there were all the times we thought so differently on deadlines (what me worry). But again God used mom to help me see that I was to take care of my part of the 'wall' and let you take care of your part. That freed us both up. And as usual there was always enough food. That 10% no show always works.

Then there was the 80%- 20% principle. What an eye opener to realize I was the 80% of the problem.

I'm so quick to tell you almost every thought that crosses my mind, while on the other hand not so with you. But I am so thankful that in recent years you've been able to share more of your thoughts and feelings with me.

You are my best friend, lover, confidant and so much more. Through your love for me I've been able to better understand God's love for me. When I look in your eyes as you look at me, I can sense the great love you have for me and I'm in awe. You have said I saw something in you when you didn't. Well, you show me all the time how valuable I am to you. Thanks!!!

You are so much fun to be around. You have helped me put cotton around things or at least helped me reword some things. And I think my directness has sometimes help you too.

We have both learned through the years that we are so different and that's good. We compliment each other, we don't compete with each other. As a team we possess many wonderful qualities. As a team we also help each other to say 'so what' to situations.

We have learned to laugh at ourselves and each other. I think maybe getting older helps to not take ourselves so seriously.

Speaking of getting older, I'm sure glad we are doing that together. I thank God all the time for what we have and our relationship just keeps getting better.

Happy Easter to my wonderful husband. You've been called many things by many people but a plumb- line definitely fits. Your steady walk with the Lord, your love for Him, me, your family and for men has impacted many lives.

Love,
Tammy

Epilogue - The Story Continues

Fast forward to July 7, 2020

This is the day Charlie entered heaven. What a glorious day! As you read 'Charlie's Letters' our prayer is God has opened your eyes, maybe in new ways, to the truth Charlie lived while he was on earth, that he was dead and Christ was living His life through Charlie. Galatians 2:20

Even now we see God continues to live through him, through his book, through his family and many people he shared his life with and are now sharing their lives with others... It goes on and on, we will never know this side of heaven how many lives have been touched.

Oswald Chamber's wife went to his meetings and took notes. It was her notes that became 'My Utmost for His Highest'. Charlie used to tease me, saying why wasn't I taking notes? When I see him I'm going to tell him 'I shared his story'. We still make a good team.

Charlie would want me to include how you can have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Click [HERE](#) for Charlie's Testimony at CBMC event Feb. 7, 1991.

Click [HERE](#) for Charlie's Testimony at CBMC event May 20, 1976.

Click [HERE](#) for Charlies sermon on John chapter 21 he preached at Calvary Church, in St Peters, MO.

I hope you enjoyed Charlie's Letters. I would love to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me with comments, questions, or to learn more about men's ministries in your area at:

Charliesletters70@gmail.com

Tammy Williams

Ministry to Men

... Connecting Men In Ministry

Ministry to Men

P.O. Box 1041

St. Peters, MO 63376

Phone: 636-720-1202

E-Mail: office@ministrytomen.net

Web site: www.ministrytomen.net